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THE
RETENTION OF INDIA.

THE
RETENTION OF INDIA.

BY
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LONDON:
TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18, CATHERINE ST., STRAND.
1872.

LONDON :

BRADBURY, EVANS, AND CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

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A map of the Bay of Bengal, showing the coastline of India and the Bay of Bengal. The text "BAY OF BENGAL" is written across the map.

THE RETENTION OF INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

BRITISH RULE IN INDIA.

Modern Nationalities—Diverse Population of India—Mogul Emperors—British Confidence—Consequences of Revolutions in India—Native Opinion and Native States—Native Character—Adoption—Treatment of Natives by European Officials—Treatment of native Princes and European Officers by the State—Strife chronic in India—Belief in the Marvellous—Annexation of Oude—Restoration of Royal Family of Oude—Railways and Health—Irrigation—Agriculture—Cattle—Old Servants of the Company—Revenue—The Wahabee Conspiracy—Employment of Natives—British Rule a Benefit to the Mass of the People.

MODERN NATIONALITIES.

BURKE expressed himself as appalled when he contemplated the British empire in India. If the dominion then appeared abnormal to the philosophic mind, what would be the case

now? Many countries in both hemispheres were then mere geographical expressions, and populations were held in subjection by foreign troops, whilst slavery was in full swing, even in republics. Unless there is a relapse into barbarism, it may safely be predicted that such conquests as that of Spain by Napoleon will not be attempted in the future. Nations are now composed of large families, the one common bond of which is language. The large empire of China has just escaped being conquered, owing to the development of the modern idea of nationalities. Were the British to live their career in the East over again, the second life would be widely different from the first. However we are now committed to empire in India; we have to deal with facts and responsibilities, and we must make the best of them.

DIVERSE POPULATION OF INDIA.

The peculiar feature in the population of India is the diversity of races, which has contributed largely, if not wholly, to British supremacy. Although the Mohammedans have been conquerors in comparatively modern times, yet they have become a portion of the people, and are looked upon as "natives," which persons of European descent never can be. Differences of religion and caste are obstacles to the people of India being united, but perhaps not more so than the extent of the country, which tends to retard combinations of the inhabitants, with their opposite habits and character. Although in times past there never has been a general combination of the people of India against British rule, it does not follow that

such may not occur in the future, as, contrasts in the population notwithstanding, all the Oriental races are looked upon as "natives," whereas Europeans are essentially regarded as "foreigners."

Natives of India of different races and creeds did combine in the Mutiny of 1857, the common object being to throw off British rule; but the Mutiny was badly organised, and those who had anything to lose had no time to consider, in consequence of the outbreak being precipitated. In a revolution people of substance and respectability must have time to reflect. Thus we see them holding aloof from sudden *emeutes*, and afterwards sailing with the stream. The possessor of property in India, by tact, can retain it single-handed, and would look with contempt on the barbaric device, which

induced the chief and his eldest son to take different sides in the Scotch rebellions.

MOGUL EMPERORS.

A great deal has been said about the prosperity of India under the Mogul Emperors. No doubt some noble public works were constructed in their time, but as regards the revenue collected, there have been assuredly Oriental exaggerations, and mistakes in figures. As a rule British administration has been followed by increase of revenue. The Mahommedans never really had sway over the whole of India in the same sense that the British have, as the satraps appointed in the south by the Emperor of Delhi, in a short time set up as sovereigns on their own account.

BRITISH CONFIDENCE.

On the part of the British people there has never been any great uneasiness, except during the Mutiny, as to the retention of India. This may be judged from the manner in which investments have been made in the country. Superiority at sea has been considered to guarantee the possession of our Eastern Empire. If we could not reinforce our army in India, in case of disturbances, there would be an end of our dominion at once, as there was of the French in Egypt.

CONSEQUENCES OF REVOLUTION IN INDIA.

The overthrow of the British power in India, means a great deal more than the passing of a country from one rule to another. It means anarchy, chaos, and ruin to the

Europeans connected with it. When a territory in Europe changes hands, there is a transfer of the debt, and a general arrangement of the finances. The scenes which occurred during the Mutiny may be taken as an index of what would be the general condition of India, should there be a sudden collapse of the British power.

NATIVE OPINION AND NATIVE STATES.

It is difficult to ascertain the real opinions of natives upon any question, but more especially upon such an important matter as the British rule in India. In Europe comparisons are sometimes drawn between the administration of native States and that of the British, not always to the advantage of the latter. It is not fair to judge of native rule by giving it the benefit of British pre-

ponderance throughout India generally, as by such means alone order is preserved, and native States are not obliged to keep up large armies for their protection. It is very easy for a native principality to become a model State under such circumstances. To make a just comparison, we must consider the British absent from India, or never to have been there at all. Without the controlling authority of the British, the normal condition of India is one of turbulence; and warlike and plundering tribes seem, as it were, to rise from the ground, as did the Mahrattas, developing into formidable military States.

The natives as a whole are no doubt sensible of the many advantages flowing from British dominion, the first of which is the protection to life and property; but whatever benefits there be, there must always be

that sentiment natural to the heart of man, as repressed by Napoleon, the dislike of one nation to another. Although there is this natural feeling, yet natives have in general a low estimate of each other, and a respect for the integrity of the European official.

NATIVE CHARACTER.

One of the prominent peculiarities of the native character is its uncertainty. In case of insurrection against the British power, instances of extraordinary treachery would occur, whilst support would certainly come from most unexpected quarters. It is thus impossible to reckon with anything approaching to certainty upon any particular force being exerted in our favour. In a crisis a native is apt to lose his head, and not to know his own mind for two days

consecutively. It is probable that when Nana Sahib volunteered assistance to the British at the outbreak of the Mutiny, he was sincere, but that being a flabby-minded person, he was carried along with the stream. Natives are constantly changing their minds about matters all important to themselves. A sepoy volunteers for service beyond seas one day, and next morning comes to his officer to cancel his previous application. The man has been influenced in the meantime by others. In consequence of this peculiarity of uncertainty in the native character, the British nation would do well not to rely absolutely upon aid in the future from a given quarter, because it has come from such before.

ADOPTION.

Our rule in India has been a just one upon the whole towards the natives. In the absorption of native States Lord Dalhousie went too fast. It was wrong to annex native States on the death of a prince when near relatives were alive, as was done in some instances. Previous to the Mutiny, the Hindoo custom of adoption of an heir was repugnant to the British mind; but since that time a revolution in practice has been brought about. It does seem strange to European ideas that titles and territories should pass by adoption, or high art in baby-farming, into strange hands. Where a distinguished family becomes extinct in Europe, there is an end of it, except in history; and, perhaps, had no mutiny occurred, the Hindoo

mind, in its progress, might have been educated up to the point of regarding adoption as obsolete, as hook-swinging, or suttee.

TREATMENT OF NATIVES BY EUROPEAN
OFFICERS.

It is not probable that the natives of India would have been so well treated by any other Europeans as they have been by the British, who in general act with much kindness towards them in their daily intercourse. It would have been well had the Government been as efficient in its statesmanship as its employés have on the whole been in their dealings with the natives.

TREATMENT OF NATIVE PRINCES AND
EUROPEAN OFFICERS BY THE STATE.

In the cases of Tanjore, Nagpore, the Carnatic, and Oude, the British Government

has committed gross acts of injustice towards native princes, but their fate has not been worse than that of the European officers on the breaking up of the regimental system. A legal quibble was taken advantage of to deny officers compensation for the loss of the bonus on their leaving the service, although the same had been sanctioned by the former Government, and guaranteed by Parliament in the Act commonly designated "the Henley Clause." The unfairness of this proceeding has been further demonstrated by the fact of the officers of the British service obtaining their over regulation purchase-money, and the officers of the new Line regiments the bonus usual in their corps. These latter officers were at one time in the service of the East India Company. It is not too much to say that the

Administration of India has been carried on by the devotion and personal character of the officers of the State, both civil and military. They looked up to the Government with reverence, and were ready to sacrifice themselves to advance its interests. It is sad to think that all this is changed; and that, instead of looking upon the State as a protector and friend, the officers should regard it as an enemy. In this condition of things it is superfluous to say that the service is thoroughly demoralised. Since the fatal day of the formation of the several Staff Corps, the vessel of the Native Army has been drifting nearer and nearer to the rocks, till at last the wreck is complete. The army is now a huge disorganised mass, and those in authority are afraid to meddle any more with it, as every effort to make mat-

ters right has only resulted in increased failure.

The only way out of the difficulty would appear to be to pension the old officers on a liberal scale, to abolish the Staff Corps, and place all the officers on a General List, with a certain allotment of Colonels' allowances, as was the case in the Artillery. The rate of pension after twenty years' service might be increased, to permit of officers retiring before being used up; and if there were Bonus Funds, so much the better, as there would be no supercession such as there was in the British service, and officers require a steady flow of promotion to keep them in good humour. The officers do not consider that the Government has acted honourably towards them in not carrying out the guarantee of Parliament. The Legisla-

ture is also culpable in not insisting upon its own behests being fulfilled, especially in a matter of so much magnitude. If the officers are estranged from the Government, it may be asked why do they volunteer for perilous expeditions, such as that to Abyssinia? The answer is, that only some of them do, and that so great is the monotony of life in India, that volunteers will always be found to come forward for any service, no matter how great the risks may be. They volunteer, however, not to please the Government, but themselves.

It is impossible that this state of matters can continue, although the authorities may blind their eyes to the facts. If not righted by the Government, the usual result will follow when things come to the worst. The Indian Empire cannot be permanently administered with success whilst the European

officers are imbued with feelings of antagonism and hatred towards the Government. It would be a statesmanlike feat to re-create the devotion to the Government which actuated the officers of the East India Company. The task is a difficult one, and will require time, as it is not to be accomplished with the present materials, it being hopeless to expect that the old officers will be contented as long as they remain in the service.

It is requisite in India, where a handful of foreigners rules nearly two hundred millions of subjects, that the officials of the Government should believe in it. This was the case formerly, but is not so now, not only in consequence of the violation of the guarantee of Parliament, but on account of the disingenuous manner in which it was combated and evaded.

STRIFE CHRONIC IN INDIA.

It was remarked by Sir Charles Napier that there always was some devilry going on in India. That vast region, from time immemorial, has been a scene of strife, with intervals of peace only since the establishment of the British power. Hosts from beyond the frontier have invaded it, whilst military nations have sprung up in its midst, and organised pillage on a grand scale. What are supposed to be the non-military classes would develop into warriors were restraint removed. Who knows, had the British Empire succumbed during the Mutiny, what might have been the military successes of Tantia Topee? In old times such men as he created military nations and dynasties, sweeping like the whirlwind vast

territories in their victorious course. And yet Tantia, previous to the Mutiny, was a man of peace. In some part of India or another there are sure to be disturbances at given intervals. At one time it is the Seikh army marching to encounter the British, at another the Bengal army mutinying. Strife has been the normal condition of the country, and it recurs at certain periods, no matter how severe may have been the repression. The physique of the people deteriorates in time of peace, but were restraint removed, the military qualities would be developed as if by magic.

BELIEF IN THE MARVELLOUS.

There is a great tendency on the part of the natives of India to believe in the marvellous. At times, the air is full of vague

rumours and prophecies ; and, as these latter are largely accepted, assistance is lent to their fulfilment.

ANNEXATION OF OUDE.

Consequent upon the distance from Great Britain, there has always been an amount of injustice and oppression exercised in India. There have, however, been conspicuous instances of moderation on the part of the British Government. After the death of Tippoo Sultan, the kingdom of Mysore might have been appropriated ; but the dethroned Hindoo dynasty was restored, although the Mahommedan had become hereditary. Perhaps the most unwarrantable act of dispossession was in the case of the King of Oude. The ruler of Oude was formerly designated the Vizier, but, under the favour

of the British, developed into a King. If there is any kingly qualification at all, it is the hereditary one. Even elected kings, such as Leopold of Belgium, are followed on the throne by members of their family. The King of Oude was, no doubt, unfit to reign, as many men like him have been, who neglect the duties of their high position, and deliver themselves over to dissipation. That was no reason, however, for deposing the dynasty and appropriating the country, with a whine that the change was made for the good of the people. The British Government should have assumed the management of the dominions of the monarch whilst he retained his dignities. In case of absolute necessity, he might have been deposed, and a successor appointed in the dynasty.

RESTORATION OF ROYAL FAMILY OF OUDE.

One hears it sometimes acknowledged that great oppression has been perpetrated in certain instances, but that what has been done cannot now be undone, it being too late. It is never too late to be just, and to restore property unjustly acquired,—never too late to repent. To repent, and to restore ill-gotten goods, is to act according to the teaching of Christ; to retain them is to listen to the whisperings of the Evil One. There is no obstacle in the way of restoring Oude, at least nominally, to the royal dynasty—no strategic reasons against it, and there can be no motive for retaining the country, but “that old gentlemanly vice—avarice.”

RAILWAYS AND HEALTH.

Many noble works have been executed in India by the British Government, not the least of which are the railways, which conduce largely to the health of the people,—long journeys on foot, or by the old modes of conveyance, being calculated to produce cholera. The same cause which produces typhoid fever in Great Britain is a prolific source of cholera in India. That cause is drinking water impregnated with sewage. In India, in very dry weather, a number of people may congregate on the banks of a river or reservoir, and use the water with impunity, when the supply is low. If the ground in the vicinity, however, has become fouled, and rain causes the impurities to be mixed with the drinking water, cholera is the

probable result. Great praise is due to the British Government for the efforts which it has made within the last few years in the cause of sanitary reform. The ignorance of the natives is, however, a great obstacle, as it is hard to convince them that a small stream or tank can be defiled by their numerous objectionable practices. They look upon its capacity to resist noxious influences much in the same light as Europeans regard the ocean. Water cleanses everything ; but that it can be defiled does not appear to enter into their imagination. It must, therefore, be difficult to make such people zealous in carrying out directions on the subject of water in detail.

The dry earth system is suitable to India, the refuse being conveyed in carts to a distance from human habitations. In the case

of large cities, tramways for the removal of all filth would be a great boon. In some parts of India, there is little or no cholera where it was exceedingly virulent twenty-five years ago. It may never disappear from the country altogether, but there can be no doubt that it has two powerful antagonists in the railways and pure water.

The railways have not been an unmixed good to India, on account of the large supplies of firewood required. In many parts of the country, timber has become scarce, not only on account of the demand for the railways, but also in consequence of the use of the wood by the population without renewal by planting. Government has, of late years, paid attention to the preservation of the large forests, but little heed seems to have been paid to regular re-planting

over the face of the country at large. The consequence is, that in many places the rainfall has much decreased. The British Government has not imitated its native predecessors as it should have done, in planting groves and the sides of the public roads.

IRRIGATION.

A great deal more might have been done in the way of irrigation than has been done. The peninsula to the east of the Western Ghâts receives in many quarters but little of the south-west monsoon, as the clouds, dashing against the mountains, are carried out to the east. The north-east monsoon is very uncertain and irregular, and, as it does not continue for many days, it is not sufficient generally to afford a supply of water to last long.

The rivers flowing from west to east seem designed by nature to afford reservoirs of water, to last from June till the end of the year, when the monsoon may be expected to break from the north-east.

AGRICULTURE.

It must seem strange to those unacquainted with India that, with such an immense population, the Government being the landowners, there is a difficulty in making the two ends meet. The fact is, that India is an old and a used-up country. Agriculture is about the same as it must have been in the days of Noah. The ground is scraped with a piece of wood drawn by a pair of bullocks, and the soil receives no manure, that from the bullocks being consumed as fuel. In countries where that mode of cultivation is

pursued in virgin soil, it is found expedient to remove to a fresh locality in a year or two. But the population of India is so immense that the inhabitants cannot move to new fields. Under these circumstances, it cannot be wondered at that the crops should be of the most wretched description. The rain and heat make them what they are, but these cannot do everything in dry cultivation. It is astonishing that, when a proportion of what is taken from the earth is not returned to it, the crops should be what they are.

COAL.

If India had a supply of coal, which would prevent the people from using the wood indiscriminately, and cause them to utilise the manure from their cattle in fertilising the soil, the face of the country would present a

different aspect. The climate would be improved, and there would be no more deficits under the British Government in time of peace.

OLD SERVANTS OF THE COMPANY.

In former times, when many European gentlemen in India perhaps never visited Europe from the beginning of their service till their retirement, native ideas were in vogue, everything being viewed from an Oriental stand-point. Consequently matters jogged on in the old Eastern way. Since the establishment of rapid communication with Europe, native ideas have given way, but a restlessness and desire for change have supervened, the European civilian or military man looking forward to the time when he may be enabled to quit India temporarily or

for ever. Thus India suffers. If the country could have the services of men like the old employés imbued with the new but Western ideas in regard to improvement, the gain to India would be great. The residence of Europeans in India is too temporary to induce them to take the desired interest in agriculture, public works, planting, and general improvement of the face of the country.

REVENUE.

It is difficult to raise taxes in India with the exception of that on land. Of all direct taxes, that on income is the most objectionable and unsuited to the population of India, first, because they are a conquered people ; and second, on account of the subtle nature of their minds. From these two causes they avoid payment. An income-tax is only

adapted to nations possessed by a spirit of patriotism, and attachment to their institutions, which induce taxpayers to liquidate arrears in the shape of "conscience" money. In consequence of the high price of provisions, the condition of the cultivator in India has generally changed for the better since 1857, and therefore additional revenue can be raised from the land. But the balance of income and expenditure can only be restored by a reduction of the latter, and that can be effected in the native army, which, since the whole country, from Peshawur to Cape Comorin, has been opened up by the railways, has survived its original purposes.

THE WAHABEE CONSPIRACY.

Of late years a Mahommedan revivalist conspiracy has sprung up in India, its sup-

posed head-quarters being at Patna. This conspiracy has not only sent its emissaries over India, but has even made war on the frontier. Most probably Government is not aware of all the ramifications of this secret society, Englishmen generally not having a genius for unravelling seditious plots, and natives being master hands at their concoction. The Englishman in India does not trouble himself much about possible risings of the natives. The climate of itself is sufficient to bear for the time being, and it is a question whether he would not prefer a revolt occasionally to relieve the tedium of his existence. This conspiracy is, however, a matter of the gravest importance, and it is very probable that it was connected with the Mutiny of 1857, by instilling into the minds of the Hindoo soldiers alarm respecting the

greased cartridges. A year before the Mutiny predictions hailed from Patna that all the Europeans were to be killed, or forced to leave the country. As signs of the insurrection, which burst forth in May, 1857, were apparent long before, in the demeanour of the Sepoys, it is fair to infer that there may have been a connection between the malcontents and this secret association, especially as there are grounds for believing that, in the course of its preparation, the revolt was precipitated by the rescue of the prisoners at Meerut. The apathy of Europeans in India must be overcome, and this conspiracy well watched. There are master spirits who direct it, and who are possessed of a subtlety of which the average British official has little conception. They travel about the country, making their observations, and paying par-

ticular attention to military garrisons. It is not probable that the majority of Mahomedans in India will ever practise the strict teaching of the Wahabees, but the Mussulmans in the aggregate are still a great element of danger. There is an amount of intolerance and latent ferocity amongst the Mahomedans of India, only wanting an opportunity to be developed. It needs no student of Lavater to read the passions as expressed in the countenance, where the majority of the inhabitants of a bazaar are Mahomedans.

There is a sort of freemasonry amongst all natives when plots are hatching. Whether from sympathy or from fear, or whatever cause, informers are rare. Where persons are not parties to a conspiracy, but cannot fail to know what is going on under their

eyes, information is seldom afforded at the right time to Government. The utmost vigilance is required as regards conspiracies in India, as that country will be more difficult to hold in the future than it has been in the past; for the charm of European rule is gone, when officers of a high class resided for long terms in the country, felt interest in nothing besides, and impressed the natives with feelings of reverence not common in these days.

EMPLOYMENT OF NATIVES.

Of late years many more appointments have been thrown open to natives. It is very desirable that they should have a large share in the government of the country, and a fair proportion of the better-paid offices. Native officials possess great capacity for

figures and for the dispatch of routine work. The native mind, however, does not originate, and in the aggregate must be reckoned far inferior to the European in the first place in Government, however invaluable it may be in the second.

BRITISH RULE A BENEFIT TO THE MASS OF
THE PEOPLE.

There are many imperfections in our rule in India, as must necessarily be the case in a country which cannot be colonized by the ruling race. Even when in the country, the British official is prevented by the climate from exercising efficient supervision out of doors; consequently he is not brought face to face with the people, and does not become sufficiently acquainted with the physical features of the district under his charge.

But, taking the Government of the British altogether, it must be considered a great blessing to the mass of the people of India, as preserving them from war, anarchy, plunder on a gigantic scale, Thuggee, Dacoitce, and other evils too numerous to mention, which are incidental to a state of society where order and authority are weak, and where the heart of man, naturally cruel, has not been regenerated by civilization and religion. Whatever good there is in model native States exists through the protection and controlling power of the British, as administered by officials of principle and honour. The British dominion will some day cease in India, but the period of its existence will be cited by future generations of natives as the "Golden Age."

CHAPTER II.

ARMAMENTS.

The Old Bengal Army—The Mutiny—Responsibility of Officers—Reconstruction—European Army—Barracks—Labour for European Troops—Asylums—Officers—Local European Force in India—Pay of Subalterns—Native Militia to be placed under the Civil Power—European Army the mainstay of British Power.

THE OLD BENGAL ARMY.

UP to the year 1857, the Bengal Native Infantry consisted of seventy-four regiments, with a full complement of British officers on foot. It was part of the military system up to 1857, to have important positions assigned to native troops all over the Presidency, for the maintenance of order, communications not having been developed, and all movements taking place by regular

marches. A Bengal regiment, in former days, would sometimes be on the march for a period of three months, on changing one garrison for another. The men composing these regiments were largely recruited from the high-caste Hindoos of Oude, a country under its own king, and where, up to the time of their actual enlistment, many of them had never beheld a European in their lives. They were, therefore, mere mercenaries, and could under the circumstances be no other. It must, therefore, be considered to have been a fatuity on the part of the British Government to have drawn a conclusion, that because these men were ranged in battalions, each with a red coat on his back and a musket on his shoulder, they were necessarily trustworthy, and that they possessed the morale essential to soldiers. Be-

sides the regular army, there were several contingents composed of men of the same class. The sepoy were tall and handsome, and the appearance of some of the regiments was magnificent. Hence they became the fashion, and their loyalty to the State never seemed to be doubted by those who had been with them all their lives, and who were supposed to know them best. Their interior economy and discipline, however, did not satisfy strangers, who predicted evil days from the laxity allowed, and foretold that a crash must come sooner or later.

THE MUTINY.

A short time previous to the Mutiny, the Government had established schools of musketry, with the view of arming the

sepoys in due course with the Enfield rifle. The same process being extended, the men would have been armed with the breech-loader, the native army, as was wont, following the British as its model. Had the Mutiny occurred a generation later than it did, all the native infantry being equipped with breech-loaders, it is impossible to tell what might have been the fate of India ; but the rebellion would have been of the most formidable nature, and would have required all the force of Great Britain to suppress it, even if it could have been put down at all.

In all probability a mutiny would have occurred in the Bengal army, on the completion of the great lines of railway through India, as it would have become necessary, for financial reasons, to partly break up the

enormous force, from its being no longer required.

It is no wonder that the old officers had confidence in their men, who had fought so well in many battles, and who had left their bones, by whole battalions, to whiten in Affghanistan. They had, indeed, mutinied in detail in the Punjaub and Scinde about pay, but a native is always troublesome about money, and it is easy to arrange acts of insubordination arising out of matters of that kind, the Government making a great flourish and pretence about discipline, and no end of parade and fuss in punishing the mutineers, who generally obtain what they want and return to their duty. Thus reasoned the officers; they never thought that the sepoy would mutiny *en masse*, and be turned into incarnate fiends; for any matter

which had hitherto been the cause of insubordination, had only affected a portion of the army in a particular locality.

The sepoy from Oude had an unconquerable dislike to leaving India proper. There were no doubt many men of the class in the Madras army, who served with their regiments in Burmah and other countries beyond seas. One swallow, however, does not make a summer, and pecuniary considerations in their case were most likely all-powerful.

Although the Bengal army marched into Affghanistan, yet it is probable that the recollections of the climate and the disasters exercised a great influence in producing the mutiny of 1857. Service in Scinde was particularly distasteful to the men, and no doubt the memory of the decimated bat-

talions of Affghanistan was ever in their minds. Signs of disaffection in the army began with the Persian war, and although it is generally impossible to obtain evidence of the exact truth as regards conspiracies in the East, yet it is a fair inference to make, that the war with Persia alarmed the sepoys of the Bengal army, and that they dreaded the prospect of service in Central Asia.

Lord Dalhousie had previously ordered that all men enlisted after a given date were bound to proceed on foreign service, wherever directed. The order did not affect men who were previously in the service, but none the less must the sepoys have considered it dangerous to themselves personally. The native mind is suspicious as regards the thin edge of the wedge, and it

doubtless reasoned that when a considerable number of general-service men should be enlisted, little respect would be paid to the reservation as regarded themselves. Besides, were they not a military caste, and did not the new order affect their nearest friends and relatives? And were not the interests of those as dear to them as their own?

The Hindoo sepoy from Oude, after all, never thoroughly fraternised with the British, as he was a grown man before he had anything to do with them, and there was a difficulty in interchanging thoughts with him in conversation, which was not the case with men born and brought up within British territory, and to whom Europeans were familiar from their birth. It would, therefore, be next to an impossibility to disabuse the minds of such men of suspicions

as to the good faith of Government, when once entertained by them.

Much has been said regarding the annexation of Oude being one of the main causes of the mutiny. It doubtless entered the minds of the sepoys that, as the British Government had annexed Oude, it was intended to form the whole of India into one nation with one religion ; but that idea would emanate from the wire-pullers, and would not spontaneously suggest itself to the main body of the sepoys.

Nothing impresses natives so much as the exercise of power. War in India proper against native States has always been popular with sepoys, because it was profitable, and because they liked fighting for fighting's sake. The sepoys were more surprised at our moderation in our dealings with native

princes, than at our annexations. They were not likely, therefore, to make an exception in the case of Oude.

In making an analysis of motives to crime, we must search for what would affect the interests of the actors. Foreign service was accursed in the eyes of the great body of the men of the Bengal army, because it entailed great risks to all that was valuable to them in this world—caste and life itself. The dread therefore of service out of India, and more particularly beyond the hateful ocean, stands forth as the most probable cause of the great sepoy mutiny of 1857.

Whilst the minds of the men were thus ripe for mutiny, and whilst the Persian war was going on; arose the matter of the greased cartridges. It came opportunely, as it was just the kind of question to influence the

minds of the ignorant mass. It can never, however, be for a moment supposed, that unless the sympathies of the great body of the sepoys had been estranged from the Government, an accommodation of what was objectionable in the cartridges would not have been arrived at. Difficult questions relating to caste, and to the religion and usages of the different classes composing the native armies of India, have been continually recurring ; but when complaints have been genuine, they have been generally adjusted by the tact of the European officers. When the question of the greased cartridges cropped up, it was determined by those behind the scenes, that the Bengal army should mutiny. How the mutiny broke out, increased, and was finally suppressed, are matters of history.

In the Madras army not a single regiment mutinied, but, on the contrary, forces from the coast assisted materially in the suppression of the rebellion.

In the Bombay army mutiny occurred only amongst men of the same class as that of which the Bengal army was mostly composed.

As the world, however, does not know its greatest men, it is probable that the revolt would have spread to the South and West, had it not been encountered with vigour at Nagpore, one of the connecting links between the Upper Provinces and the West and South.

RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS.

A British officer has a difficult part to play in troublous times. If he acts with vigour

and crushes a formidable insurrection in the bud, he is branded as a monster by a portion of the public, which asserts that summary executions were unnecessary, and that the magnitude of the rising was altogether exaggerated. The first thing which an officer has to think of is to keep within the law. He should therefore clearly understand what he is authorised to do by law, and then he should act without fear. There is not the slightest doubt that the greatest successes have resulted from officers acting with vigour on emergent occasions, and the greatest reverses from the conduct of those who have been pusillanimous. One instance on each side will be sufficient.

In the beginning of this century, Sir Rollo Gillespie, when he received a message announcing the mutiny at Vellore, did not

hesitate a moment, but galloped off instantly at the head of his troopers to the scene of the insurrection. Arriving at Vellore, he found his way into the fortress by means of ropes extemporised out of whatever materials came to hand, and the consequence was that the rising was crushed at once. This was a religious or caste insurrection, organised by wire-pullers, and had it not been instantly suppressed, it might have been even more formidable than the rebellion of 1857, as our power was then new in India, we had few European troops, and no telegraphs. Take the other instance—that of the officer commanding at Meerut when the native troops mutinied in 1857, and marched off to Delhi. There was a regiment of European Cavalry at Meerut at the time. Excuses were made that the regiment was not in a state to

undertake the pursuit of the mutineers. It may not have been up to its full strength, but no effort was made to use the means at hand. Where infantry is in retreat and armed with such a weapon as the old Brown Bess, which was what the sepoys were provided with, there is no limit to the power of cavalry, though few in number. The pursuit of the Sikhs after the battle of Goojerat by Sir Walter Gilbert, is an instance of this. But there was no Sir Rollo Gillespie on the spot at Meerut. If there had been, there would have been no mutiny in 1857, for the punishment inflicted upon the mutinous regiments would have struck terror into the hearts of the malcontents.

The mutiny, when it broke out in the Punjab, was met with courage and ability ; but merit has not been recognised in places

where there was no insurrection. Prevention is better than cure, and the really illustrious ones of the earth are those who prevent catastrophes. Those catastrophes are present to their far-seeing intelligence, but invisible to the world at large. Hence a debt is not acknowledged, because it is not known. Had a statesman in France prevented the revolution of 1789, or the war of 1870, he would undoubtedly have been one of the great benefactors of mankind, but oblivion would have claimed him for its own.

RECONSTRUCTION.

The Government having got rid of the Bengal army (and a good riddance it was at any price, except the massacre of the Europeans), was obliged to adopt a new system, as it was impossible to rebuild the old. As

is usual in such cases, some nostrum which has been before the public for many years, but which is not understood, and has never been thoroughly debated or argued, is brought to the front, and is suddenly adopted through the influence of the executive for the time being. It is taken for granted that it is a panacea for all evils, and is adopted without sufficient inquiry, or without regard to consequences, apparently merely from the fact of its having been advocated for a long time by some people. In this way the several Indian staff corps passed into, it cannot be said "law," but existence, as they were entirely at variance with the guarantee of Parliament, which ensured to the officers on transfer to the Crown all the privileges as regards pay, rank, promotion, pension, and advantages, as if they had continued in

the service of the East India Company. Rank is a very sensitive thing to meddle with, and is not understood in all its bearings by the civilian mind. Its value consists simply in its giving him who possesses it a position superior to others. But when the Staff Corps were formed, the old system of promotion was rudely trampled under foot, without respect to the guarantee of Parliament. Consequently the officers were driven by necessity to petition for redress. Various remedial measures were attempted, but all ended in complete failure. Like an elephant in a morass, the Secretary of State for India at last, finding that he only floundered the deeper every step he took, ceased to make any more efforts to release himself, and sat down in resignation and despair.

Anyone who has seen anything of officers

at all knows that hope is the mainspring of their lives. Service and a sickly season have attractions for them over monotony and health in garrison, as the former hold out the chance of distinction and rapid promotion, while the latter mean only weariness and stagnation. In making length of service the qualification for promotion, Government showed an ignorance of the better aspirations of officers. Certainty may suit the lethargic; but uncertainty has a charm for the stirring and the ambitious, those possessed of the true military instinct, and who are the flower of all armies. The idea of the Staff Corps was a very old one, and was originally brought forward under circumstances altogether different from those of twelve years ago. In former times, when every company had its European officer, or

officers on foot, it was found that many of the ablest of them were absent on Staff employ, and that regiments, when on service, were not so efficient as they might have been. Consequently it was considered desirable that all the European officers borne on the strength of a regiment should be employed with it. The plan for ensuring this was, however, never worked out. If it was necessary that native regular corps should be as efficient as possible in the field, then some measure to ensure the presence of all the officers was not only necessary, but no halt in progress should have been made, and the regiments should have had the best weapons which science could produce. There was no doubt that as regarded native regiments entire progress was intended in the past. The mutiny of

1857, however, caused a revolution in feeling as to the prudence of entrusting native soldiers with weapons which would render them dangerous to the European army. Instead of progress and efficiency, it was a matter of policy to favour inefficiency in view of future possible mutinies. The old panacea of the Staff Corps was, however, adopted for the new condition of things, for which it was not required.

After the collapse of the Bengal army, the simplest plan, viewing the interests of the State, and the just privileges of the officers, would have been to have kept up the old cadres, reducing the number of captains and subalterns if necessary. The officers would have been available for any duty, civil, military, or political, the cadres being merely lists to regulate promotion, and young

officers being posted to them, as of old, to keep them up. There would have been the same number of officers in the receipt of the colonel's allowance as formerly. Officers would have retired as captains, as they did in numbers in days gone by, their departure being hastened by the bonus system, which was a benefit to the State, and a blessing to the officers. Had this system of cadre promotion been adhered to, the State would have been a large gainer—first, in money, which is not of paramount importance, second, in the keeping up of the spirit of devotion which animated the officers of the old Indian army. In reconstructing the new Bengal army, the obvious plan was to form a native militia armed with the old brown Bess. A force of this kind would have been quite sufficient to keep the peace amongst a

disarmed population. There was no necessity whatever to have a larger or more expensive establishment of European officers than was usual with irregular corps, or regiments of the different contingents. All the expensive staff of lieutenant-colonels, second in command, and wing officers, is quite unnecessary, the money disbursed for salaries being merely thrown away. Such a state of *things would never be tolerated in a country where there was a public opinion to appeal to.*

The Madras and Bombay armies were also reorganised on the same principle as that of Bengal, the European officers being reduced in number, and all being mounted. The system is, however, unsuited to regiments which proceed on service beyond seas, as there is not sufficient margin left for

casualties taking place amongst the European officers. All Governments must exercise their own discretion in reducing their armies, or making changes from political considerations; but vested interests or legitimate prospects should be respected. Large reductions of native corps were made in the Madras Presidency, but instead of the regiments being bought off bodily, or the skeletons kept apart, the native commissioned and non-commissioned officers were drafted into the remaining regiments, thus delaying promotion, and engendering discontent, not for a day, but for a generation at least. Discontent is liable to be perpetuated amongst subject peoples to future generations when the causes have been removed. This injustice to the native commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Madras army

was sufficient to have caused a mutiny, and it was particularly ungracious, coming as it did after the suppression of the great insurrection, when the troops remained loyal and did good service against the mutineers. But a great deal of the trouble which has from time to time arisen in India has been brought about by the bungling and want of tact of European officials in high places.

It was evident that after the mutiny of 1857 there would be a permanent mistrust of native troops in large bodies. Although a force remained staunch at one time, yet it might mutiny at another time. It would have been supposed, therefore, in the reorganisation of the native armies, that they would have been made as harmless and inexpensive as possible, to allow of a large expenditure upon the European force, which would necessarily

be increased. Half-and-half measures, however, have been resorted to. The native army is very expensive, and it is totally inefficient on foreign service, not being properly armed, and not being worth the cost of transporting it beyond sea. If it is necessary to have native Indian troops in Burmah, China, and the Eastern settlements, a small force might be specially organised for service in those regions, never being stationed in India. The natives of Southern India would be the most suitable for such regiments—men of the same class as the Madras sappers. Government would only have to go into the market and proclaim good terms, when there would be no lack of recruits. The men would require good pay, allowances, and pensions, and could be granted the privileges of taking their families with them, and of

furlough to India occasionally. The force might be designated "Her Majesty's Eastern Army," and could garrison Burmah, the Straits Settlements, positions in China, Ceylon, and the Mauritius, with its headquarters at Singapore, or whatever place should be found the most central and convenient. As implicit confidence could be placed in a force of this description, in consequence of the different posts being separated by the sea, it might safely be made the best fighting-machine possible, and therefore could be armed with the most efficient weapon obtainable. The regiments would also require to have a full complement of European officers, as in a British Line regiment. A force of this description could go anywhere, and do anything. The relief to the finances of India would be great, as the

expenses entailed by continual movements of troops, on account of corps being required to embark for foreign service, are enormous.

The native regiments in India could be converted into local corps, the old "brown Bess" being the suitable arm, as quite sufficient for the preservation of order, and altogether safer for the Government. There is an idea among some people that the men of the Madras army rather like foreign service. There could not be a greater mistake, as every one knows who is acquainted with Madras troops. The regiments of that presidency have always been ready to embark on foreign service, because the men were well-disciplined soldiers, and because such service was in their engagements. No advantages in the shape of extra allowances or rations can compensate the sepoy for

separation from his family. If the regiments were not sent out of India, the sepoy would be far happier and more contented. A portion of the native force on the frontier alone might be armed with rifles, as it is continually liable to come into contact with the hill men, and it is only fair that it should be provided with efficient weapons. As for fighting in India, if there are insurrections, these can be suppressed by the European troops. Some native regiments in India have of late been armed with the Enfield rifle, as a compromise between the breech-loader and "brown Bess." This is a half measure, and consequently an unsatisfactory one, there being no enemy in India, if the Government only exercises vigilance as to the importation and manufacture of arms. Some persons advocate

that the native troops should be supplied with the breech-loading rifle, a limited supply of ammunition only being served out. It is, however, forgotten that this limited quantity might achieve important results at the beginning of a rebellion, in disposing of the European guards at the different arsenals, which conspirators would endeavour to get into their hands simultaneously. The Enfield rifle is a weapon by no means to be despised. As it is, even with the "brown Bess," attempts might be made to take European guards by surprise. The Government, therefore, should be particularly solicitous that European guards be not taken unawares on such occasions, for instance, as Sunday, when the troops are at church. There may be conspiracies when the Government has not the least conception

of them, and the first object of all outbreaks is to obtain possession of an arsenal. If native regiments mutiny with the smooth-bore musket only in their possession, and should no arsenal fall into their hands, the Government is quite safe, as the mutineers can always be subdued by the European regiments, armed with the breech-loading rifle. And mutiny in native troops is always a contingency to be regarded. There have been many misunderstandings on the subject of pay. Who can tell where native troops would stop, if armed with formidable rifles, and if they felt themselves masters of the situation? Thus armed, they would be sure to dictate terms of pay to the Government at some time or other, and this would be the least evil. Violence naturally follows insubordination, and when a soldier

once commits himself to resistance to authority, he feels compelled to go on. Respect for human life is not a characteristic of Asiatics. By serving out rifles to the native armies, the Government invites mutiny, and most assuredly it will come about if these arms are issued in considerable quantities.

A captain, with two subalterns as assistants, and a medical officer, would be quite a sufficient staff for a regiment of native militia, armed with the old smooth-bore musket. The saving to the finances would be immense, and would be the means of restoring equilibrium to the exchequer.

It is highly discreditable to the executive, and also to the legislature of this country, that matters should have been allowed to drift into their present condition. The time

will, however, come when the country will be forced to give its attention to the native armies of India, for the state of affairs is too unsound to last.

EUROPEAN ARMY.

After the mutiny it was considered that an army of about 80,000 European troops would be required to preserve order in India. Since the great lines of railway have been completed, the number has been reduced to between 60,000 and 70,000 men; but as far as the keeping of the peace is concerned, the army might be further reduced, if our own native troops are not permitted to become dangerous, and if native States are not allowed to arm. The preservation of order in India, and the defence of the country from invasion, are two dis-

inct questions. The latter shall be treated separately in the next chapter. Central Asia not being considered, the only native State in or in the vicinity of Hindostan with any pretensions to military efficiency is Nepal, but Nepal is not sufficiently powerful to be formidable of itself. That State, however, might combine with others. All the native States in India proper, the Nizam, Holkar and Scindiah, and others, should therefore only be allowed such sepoy as are necessary for the carrying on of the internal administration of their dominions, and as are required to keep up the pomp and circumstance of the princes. As the paramount power undertakes the protection of their territories from external aggression, modern guns and the latest inventions in breech-loaders are not needed, and their in-

trodition should be rigorously suppressed by the British Government. Native States must be considered to be peculiarly fortunate in being saved the expense of defending their borders. No wonder, therefore, that they should be in a flourishing condition. Many European countries, struggling under heavy deficits, might envy the financial situation, whatever their dignity may say to the fact of their territories being defended for them.

All experience shows that natives, no matter what their number may be, cannot stand against Europeans in the open field. The fewer forts, therefore, we have, the better, as their multiplication only increases the temptation to insurrection. Arsenals we must have at different central points for storing the munitions of war, and our safety

from insurrection lies in the seizure of these by conspirators being rendered impossible. At present, arrangements for the accommodation of stores are very defective, the depôts being, in many places, at a distance from the main bodies of European troops. The British nation only attends to military matters by fits and starts. When there are no visible troubles, apathy supervenes. As an instance of this, it may be mentioned that most British regiments in India were armed, in 1870, with the muzzle-loader, although the war was very likely to have included Great Britain and Russia as belligerents. If people do not like being instructed, they like less being preached at, and least of all being prophesied at. Nations only accept prophecies from a venerable patriarch, such as the Duke of Wellington ;

and although reverence for age, position, and great deeds in the past, has not died out amongst us, yet there will always be a portion of the public of the advanced schools who repudiate authority as such, and, forgetting that some principles at least are eternal, vote the ideas of illustrious and hoary-headed chiefs as out of date. As the French dramatist has it, when decay comes, the rhetorician appears, and splitting of adverbs is the favourite occupation. Meantime the enemy is at the gates in the darkness—the enemy, who acts and does not talk.

BARRACKS.

In former years, European troops were quartered in forts and barracks, which caused a large death-rate, in consequence of insuf-

ficient room, great heat, want of ventilation, and miasma from the ditches. Of late years, large sums have been expended on barracks—immense masses of building, which are ovens in the hot weather, and in the Upper Provinces too cold in the cold weather. Barracks in India occupied by large bodies of European troops, with their families and camp-followers, have a tendency to become unhealthy after a period. In hot countries, it is better, for sanitary reasons, that the ground should be changed from time to time. The palatial barracks have, therefore, been a failure, both in health and comfort. The best way of accommodating European troops in India would appear to be to locate them, in small bodies, in particular localities, as far as the exigencies of the service will admit, and in barracks built of cheap materials, the

roofs being of thatch, and not of chunam, or tiles, which retain the heat. Barracks of this kind can be abandoned at little loss, should they be no longer required, or should the situation become unhealthy. It is a painful sight to see stately piles of building, erected within the last few years at an enormous expense, now of no value, their sites being positions of no strategical importance, and troops being condemned to inhabit them simply because the barracks are in existence.

LABOUR FOR EUROPEAN TROOPS.

The Government is entitled to credit for having made efforts to improve the condition of the European soldier in India, although, in the matter of barracks, such efforts have not been attended with success. The ques-

tion of employing the soldiers in useful occupations has only been nibbled at, not grappled with. In the cavalry and artillery the men have not much time for extra work ; but the infantry soldier has almost nothing to do in addition to his ordinary parades, except an occasional tour on guard. Commanding officers, in order to give their men employment, are obliged to have recourse to frequent drills, at which the men learn nothing. An infantry soldier, after having been once well drilled, does not require to have his instruction repeated every week and every day of the year. The only part absolutely necessary to be kept up is his shooting, which should be practised every twelve months. It is, however, desirable that every soldier should have a course of drill in each year, and the larger the bodies

that are brought together the better. But the constant repetition and monotony of regimental drills have a stupefying effect on the mind, which becomes cramped and unable to generalise. It is the same with officers as with private soldiers. The officer who has been at drill all his life considers it as an end, and not as a means; consequently he never can develop into a great general. Great captains have always, at some period of their lives, been engaged in other than purely military capacities. Where a soldier has been originally well trained, and when habits of discipline have been engrained, both he and the State will be benefited by his following some useful occupation. The men of that army which, in 1870, astonished the world by their courage, discipline, and capacity for work, had been in a great

measure relegated to civil pursuits ; but they were thorough soldiers, and their discipline and training could never be forgotten. Once a soldier, always a soldier. Such men as the Prussians, drawn from their homes, were as efficient in the field as any regular troops could be, and were handy under emergencies, which cannot be the case with the helpless being who is made to regard mechanical drill as the only essential.

The situation of the workshops should be selected, with reference to climate, in the hills and elevated regions, as in many places in the plains the heat is too great to allow of Europeans getting through much work at all periods of the year.

ASYLUMS.

One of the most estimable men whom India has ever seen, Sir Henry Lawrence, established asylums in different places on the hills for the support and education of the children of European soldiers. However good in their time these institutions may have been, it is open to doubt whether they are suitable at the present day, the necessities of life being expensive in India, and the cost of passage to Europe by the Suez Canal being moderate. It is a question, therefore, whether it would not be more advantageous to send the children to Europe, the more especially as a residence there in youth is more beneficial, both in physical and moral respects, than one in India.

OFFICERS.

When the purchase question was discussed, and it was continually asserted, that what the country required was a body of professional officers, it would have been supposed that inquiry would have been made, with reference to the officers of the old Indian army. They were professional in every sense of the term, as they had to look to the service for support, making a livelihood out of it, and the survivors obtaining a pension for their old age. When a cadet entered the service of the East India Company, he meant to remain in it, not to wear a uniform for a few years and then retire into private life. Here were large armies with professional officers, drawn from a class most likely to furnish the most efficient

officers, and yet the officers of her Majesty's army, admitted and promoted by money, would not have suffered by the comparison. Purchase, even as it was exercised in the British army, no doubt contributed largely to the efficiency of the officers. Now that it is gone, it seems to have been a laughable system, and the nation must be convicted of a deficiency in humour to have gravely authorised it so long. That the possession of money should have been the qualification for promotion over others in the army up to the year 1871, is most extraordinary. And yet some system of purchase is not only admissible, but absolutely essential. Stagnation is attended with discontent, disgust, and inefficiency ; accelerated promotion, with zeal and light-heartedness. In the Indian army of old, when the regimental system was in

force, it was illegal for juniors to purchase out their seniors. The slowness of promotion, however, having become intolerable, the officers committed breaches of the Act, which was never formally repealed. It was, however, anomalous that it should remain in the statute-book, when the Government encouraged its violation. No wonder the Government did so, as purchase saved the pocket of the State, whilst it increased the efficiency of the officers. Not only did the Indian Government approve of the violation of the Act, but it desired to support, with a pecuniary grant, a regular military retiring fund in each presidency of India, had such been established by the officers. This is the experience of the past. The pensions of the Indian Government were not sufficient to retire upon, nor are those in the British

service, the Government in order to quicken promotion in the Royal Artillery having been obliged to grant special retiring allowances. Will the country be prepared to grant such to the whole army? It may be safely predicted that the country will not, as it will see, on consideration, that purchase, rightly exercised, is a wholesome and not a vicious system. We shall, therefore, see purchase ré-established; that is, officers will be permitted to purchase out their seniors, promotion going by seniority in regiments, up to the rank of lieutenant-colonel inclusive. The millions were well spent on the abolition of purchase, if there were no other way of getting rid of the absurd system of promoting an officer who had money over one who had not. If the National Debt is only a flea-bite, the sting of 12,000,000^l. or

thereabout will not leave a mark visible, except by means of the microscope. But was there no other way of cancelling the anomalous system of supercession through money than by taking the prices of the commissions of all the officers out of the pockets of the tax-payers? Why waste the millions, which might have been given to the poor? Instead of declaring the abolition of purchase, could Parliament not simply have voted that regimental supercession henceforth should cease? The officers would have bought out their seniors as in the twelve non-purchase regiments, and there can be no doubt that every one would have received back any amount ever paid by him. Officers who were not able to purchase were the exception. To them it would have been worth while to advance the

requisite funds for a time, from the coffers of the State. Selection by merit is a good cry, and has a decidedly telling effect upon the ear of the Philistine. Selection cannot, however, be carried out in the promotion of a whole army. There have always been selections for the higher commands and for staff appointments. An officer cannot be superseded in his regimental promotion, and remain a valuable servant of the State. The loss of standing in a regiment has always been a severe punishment, and one to be awarded by a court-martial. If an officer is not efficient, he should be removed from the active list. It is very difficult to tell what the merits of any person may be in certain situations until the experiment is made. If an officer felt himself not to be qualified for his position under a purchase system, he

would sell out. Where such does not exist, it will be necessary to turn him out,—not always an easy undertaking. Without purchase, therefore, the service must be crowded with officers who are an encumbrance, but still who are not totally inefficient, and whose expulsion would be considered a grievance.

It is astonishing that the practice of sending in confidential reports should have existed so long in the army. Such a system is in use with secret associations, such as the Fenian or Wahabee, but is unsuited to the British Government, in relation to a body of gentlemen such as its officers. The inspecting officers, too, are in many cases not qualified by honesty or intelligence to give a judicial opinion regarding the merits of officers. The officers reported on un-

favourably are as likely as not to be the superiors of the general. He, perhaps, really does not know the officers upon whom he reports, is actuated by pique, or conceives a low, false, and antiquated standard of efficiency. The best officers, as a rule, leave the army before they become inspecting officers, mainly because of the monotonous duties of the profession, and also because they chafe against the unfairness and ignorance of those placed in authority over them.

When an officer may be considered unfit for his position, or for further promotion, the commanding officer should send in a full report, and there should be a public investigation, the officer being allowed an opportunity of refuting the statements made in reference to him. If these are substantiated,

he should then be removed from the effective list. It is a strange system, and altogether an un-English one, that an officer accused of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman should be tried by a court-martial, with full opportunity of vindicating himself, the result being that, if he does not succeed in doing so, he is turned out of the service, whilst a punishment equally severe in degree probably awaits him, if it is asserted in a secret and confidential report that he is inefficient, no chance being allowed him of bringing evidence to show that the statements of his superior are unfounded.

There is also a habit in the higher military authorities of screening superior officers when they have made damaging statements in their secret reports which have been found to be untrue. Altogether the system should be

overhauled by the public, and stamped out, as a disgrace to the British nation, and only in keeping with the rule of King Bomba, and such worthies, who it is to be hoped have become extinct.

The great advantage of the late purchase system was, that it gave the army young officers. It is sometimes said that the Prussian subordinate officers are in many instances old, and that young officers with troops and companies are not essential. The Prussian army conquered not on account of its old officers of lower rank, but in spite of them. Where there is genius to organize, to lead, and to direct, as there was with the Prussians, the army is silent and obeys, if ordered to march to the cannon's mouth. Where vacillation and want of power in the leaders exist, an army becomes a huge de-

bating society, and at the first shock goes to pieces. The great general not only possesses the entire confidence of the soldiers in his ability to lead them to victory, but is regarded by them as a friend who has their real interest at heart. There have been able generals, and distinguished, but a deficiency in that essential—sympathy—has kept them out of the rolls of the great captains of history.

When talent of a high class has been discovered, the officer possessing it has been advanced by brevet rank. There is no necessity for interfering with regimental seniority. We do not want talent to be universal amongst the rank and file of humanity, even if it could be found. The rule of mankind is, that the few are born to govern and the many to obey. This applies

to all bodies of men, to selected Assemblies and even to Cabinets. The officers of the British army have hitherto been quite competent to discharge, with credit, the duties required of them. The genius qualified to lead armies will appear of himself. Sometimes he remains invisible for a period, but he cannot be manufactured to order. Culture is desirable everywhere, and no doubt the education of the officer could be improved after his entry into the service ; but why was not this done instead of raising the quack cry that in future the army was to belong to the people? How amazing the audacity of those who raised such a cry, and how lamentable the ignorance and credulity of those with whom it went down! Admission to the Civil Service of India is obtained by public competition, instead of nomination, as was

formerly the case ; but it is not found that administration is improved, although a civilian on his first arrival in India possesses an amount of erudition wonderful in one so young. All the learning in the world will not make a man fit to be placed in a high and responsible position as an officer, and there are few men qualified to occupy such by natural selection. The officer in authority should be a man of high principle to begin with, and have intellect, judgment, and discrimination. He ought to be endowed with decision of character, and should have no fear of responsibility. He must avoid jumping to conclusions on subjects without proof. This last is a common defect of officers placed in superior positions, and is the cause of much strife. In fact, there is a sort of perpetual warfare going on in most military communi-

ties. No wonder, therefore, that so many officers do leave the service, and others ardently pray that they could. It is necessary also that the officer placed in a high position should be a just man and abjure favouritism. A very high standard is thus required, but so imperfect is human nature that it is rarely found. Nevertheless, the army gets on somehow, through the average efficiency of all ranks ; but no system can ever be perfect, any more than ships can be prevented from occasionally going to the bottom, or railway trains running without accidents.

LOCAL EUROPEAN FORCE IN INDIA.

In consequence of a difference of opinion between the Government and the Europeans of the local Indian army as to the payment

of bounty, on their transfer to the service of the Crown, it was deemed advisable to abolish the force, and to supply all the soldiers from her Majesty's British army. Like all other changes of a like nature, this was done suddenly, sufficient time not being allowed for investigation and reflection. On such occasions there are always military men of position, anxious to get on in life, who throw in their weight and authority on the side of the rising sun, and the mainspring of whose advocacy is expediency. To these Sir James Outram stands out in strong contrast. There was also a prejudice against a local European force in India, the impression being, somehow or other, that there was in it a chronic spirit of mutiny. There was even a prejudice against the European officers of the Company in the matter of subordina-

tion. This was the result of ignorance, and was never entertained by any person who had for any time been in India. The Government of India, administered as it is, often by persons of an unsympathetic nature, and whose imagination cannot depict the many hardships and struggles incidental to life in that country, has sometimes caused misunderstandings with its European officers and soldiers. It should be remembered, however, that by its arbitrary, ungenerous, and parsimonious conduct the Government brings most of its misfortunes upon itself. Europeans in India could have no permanent object in mutinying, the desire of most of them being, some day, to return to the land of their birth. Of all people it is most natural that they should wish to keep on good terms with the Government.

Lord Canning was not willing to incur the responsibility of paying the European soldiers a sum of about £80,000 in the shape of bounty on their transfer to the Crown. Having a doubt as to their absolute right, he consulted the lawyers, although men volunteering from one British line regiment to another, with the view of remaining in India, had always hitherto obtained the bounty. The lawyers of course, with that keen scent for business and complications which distinguishes them, pronounced against the payment. Napoleon would have banished the lawyers, Clive would have incarcerated them, or compelled them to declare that the soldiers were entitled to the bounty, whilst they would have been threatened with a more ignominious doom had they fallen into the ruthless hands of Sir Thomas Picton or General Neill. But Lord

Canning was not essentially a strong man, and was, therefore, guided by the opinion of the lawyers. Some of the soldiers became insubordinate, and the dissolution of the local European army was decreed.

In the days of the Company, the local service had always been popular. It was no drain upon the population, as far as recruiting was concerned, for the men who enlisted were in general those who would not have joined her Majesty's service. From the force being permanently located in India, many valuable men rose from the ranks to do the State good service in subordinate capacities. Some of them, too, had an extensive knowledge of native character, natives not being so reserved in the presence of a non-commissioned as in that of a commissioned officer. The expenses of constant

reliefs of European troops are enormous, and a serious drain upon the revenues of India. Now that the Suez Canal has been opened, and railway communications throughout India established, Europeans of all ranks could obtain furlough to Europe on private affairs or medical certificate at a moderate cost to the State or the individual. There is, therefore, no reason why there should not be an Indian service for men as well as for officers, and the abolition of the cadres of the regiments of the old Indian army was consequently a great mistake, as establishments of officers for new corps would always have been available. There is every reason why a European local force should be established, on the score of economy and convenience. Both Great Britain and India would be benefited, for the British army at

home would be a more formidable machine than it is at present, from being more centralised. Her Majesty's troops serving in India also might be conveyed backwards and forwards in contract vessels, and a large saving effected.

PAY OF SUBALTERNS.

As every detail connected with the European army serving in India is of importance, it may be here mentioned that the pay of subalterns is insufficient. A poor gentleman can exist in Europe on a pittance, but many comforts are absolute necessities in such a climate as that of India. There the officer is obliged to rent a house, keep a horse (he ought to have a conveyance for day work), a number of servants—to have, in fact, an establishment. All this he cannot do on his

pay. Whatever may be the policy of the Government, it should at all events keep its European army in the highest state of efficiency, and in good heart. It will, however, never obtain better officers than those whom it possessed before the Army Regulation Bill became law.

NATIVE MILITIA TO BE PLACED UNDER
THE CIVIL POWER.

Great gain to the finances would also accrue from placing the regular troops in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies under one Commander-in-Chief, with his headquarters at Poonah, or some central position. Not only would the emoluments of one Commander-in-Chief be saved, but an immense reduction of general staff and establishments would follow. The service would not suffer

from the absence of one more military dignitary, but the contrary, as the Commanders-in-Chief at the minor Presidencies have mostly been "a feeble folk," and have made their existence known, more by their blundering than their good works. The native regiments, if converted into militia and local corps, could be taken out of the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, as far as their interior economy is concerned, and made over to the civil power. If this were done, a prodigious amount of useless routine work, in the shape of returns and correspondence, usual in the regular army, would be avoided. As at present constituted, the native armies of India are like counterfeit jewels in massive settings of gold.

EUROPEAN ARMY THE MAINSTAY OF BRITISH
POWER.

Numbers of well-meaning persons, with no practical knowledge of the subject, are constantly descanting on the necessity of governing India for the good of the people. No Briton will ever deny that the natives should be treated with all fairness and justice, which, as a rule, they receive at the hands of European officials. Confiscations and arbitrary proceedings notwithstanding, when a balance is struck, it will be found that the natives of India have met with over indulgence rather than oppression and tyranny at the hands of their European masters. But if the British nation is to trust to presumed good treatment producing gratitude, and bringing forth fruit in the

shape of support in the hour of need, it will rely upon a fragile reed. The European army is the backbone of the British power in India, and when reliance is placed on any other support the Empire will disappear.

If the British Government could rely upon native loyalty, and were justified in assuming it to be a certainty, there is no need of a European army in India. Native armies, provided with the best brecch-loaders, and with the best field-pieces, could stem the tide of invasion from the direction of Central Asia, should it once more roll from that quarter. But Great Britain has never dared to look this last contingency fairly in the face, and has never taken bold and comprehensive measures to avert it. It is now upwards of thirty-five years since Vikovitch appeared at Cabul. It is said that he came

to a tragic end. Whatever his fate may have been, Britannia has been haunted by a spectre ever since. At first she saw it in the distance, and made a forward movement to confront it, but stumbled against something in the darkness. The spectre advancing, she became unnerved, and drew her robe across her face. What was at first an airy form, now grew into veritable flesh and blood, and after a while, into a mighty man in armour. The armed man has advanced to within a few feet of where Britannia stands, but she makes no sign, and still keeps her robe over her eyes.

CHAPTER III.

THE FRONTIER.

Great Britain's Destiny—Movable Columns—Alexander the Great—Grand Army of Moscow—March of General Sherman—March to Balaclava—Expedition to Abyssinia—The War of 1870—Invasion of Great Britain—Occupation of Affghanistan—Colonisation of Affghanistan—Policy towards Affghanistan—Sir Charles Napier—The War with Russia—Georgia and the Caspian—The Sea of Aral and the Oxus—The Treaty of 1856—Attitude of Great Britain in 1870—Defensive Policy of Great Britain—Responsibilities of Great Britain—Belgium—Canada.

GREAT BRITAIN'S DESTINY.

GREAT BRITAIN has had two destinies, the true destiny and the false destiny, and she has followed them both. The first was to be a great carrying and industrial power, and to found colonies in islands, avoiding

entanglements on any continent whatever. The sea was Britain's natural dominion, and the surplus population would have found their way, as the Germans do, to the antipodes, or the lands beyond the Atlantic. In following the true destiny, Great Britain has acted rightly in considering Australia as an island, and not as a continent. She should also have constituted Ceylon as the great depôt for her commerce with the peninsula of India, thereby avoiding complications on the mainland, which have existed from the beginning of her rule, and will endure unto the end.

The false destiny of Great Britain was to conquer territories on continents where she would in due time be engaged in war with powerful neighbours, and in the end meet with disaster, the issue not being altogether

contingent on her superiority at sea. England at one time held a large portion of France, but was compelled to relinquish it. It is one of the problems of the future, whether she will be able to retain her territories in America and her empire in Asia, should she come into collision with the United States and Russia.

When Great Britain founded settlements on the shores of India, it never entered her imagination that she would, in course of time, be confronted on the north by one of the greatest military powers which ever existed. Secure in her naval supremacy after the days of Nelson, she slept the sleep of the just, and indulged in dreams of gradually and peacefully drawing all the natives into her fold, and permanently putting an end to the war and strife which

had, from time immemorial, been the curse of India.

In this state of beatitude, the appearance at Cabul of Vikovitch in the flesh caused a commotion similar to that produced by the falling of a shell into an inhabited house. The result was, that warlike measures were resolved on under the influence of panic, and it was determined to invade and occupy Affghanistan by means of a movable column.

MOVABLE COLUMNS.

There are two ways of invading an enemy's country, the one by an army, which has a fixed base of operations, with which it keeps up its communications throughout; the other by a force which has no connecting links with such base, but reckons on its

power to reach it whenever it desires to do so. Great conquests have been made in all ages, and over all descriptions of armies by means of the movable column; but only consummate genius can decide as to whether by its means it is safe or not to attempt important results. The first matter to be considered in a military expedition is the safe return of the army. An army may be beaten, or it may fail in attaining its object; but nothing should compromise the safety of an army as a whole. If unsuccessful in one quarter it may be victorious in another. Commanders, therefore, who are not of the first capacity do right in adhering to the principle of the base of operations with its connecting links, except in countries where there is no military science, and where the enemy has only antiquated weapons.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Alexander the Great, quitting Macedon, marched his army, by way of Egypt, across the regions now designated "Turkey in Asia," overthrew the Persian monarchy, traversed, in his victorious route, the regions of the Oxus and the Jaxartes, reached the country of the five rivers, where he routed the hosts of Porus, and was pursuing his career of conquest further to the south, when his soldiers, fatigued and satiated with war, refused to follow him. He then retraced his steps to the Indus, and proceeded by that river to the sea. Reaching Babylon, he died.

The campaign of Alexander was performed by means of the movable column, and is, considering the distance traversed, the most astonishing expedition on record.

GRAND ARMY OF MOSCOW.

The Grand Army of Moscow was a movable column, the requisite connecting links to ensure its safety not being established, and dependence being placed on allies, who would as likely as not attack its rear, when the fighting had begun in earnest with Russia. Even had the weather been favourable for retreat, the French army was liable to be surrounded and decimated by the joint action of Russia and the German Powers. Napoleon, at this period of his career, built upon his reputation—a shadowy foundation, and lost his army. The losing of an army is an unpardonable offence, and, therefore, Napoleon must forfeit his claim to be considered the greatest commander of all time.

MARCH OF GENERAL SHERMAN.

The march of General Sherman, with his army as a movable column, through an enemy's country, from west to east, was a great military achievement, and was the means of bringing the American war suddenly to a close. Most commanders would have shrunk from the responsibility of such an expedition; but General Sherman knew what he was about; and, having made his calculations, dared, but did not defy, all calculations.

MARCH TO BALACLAVA.

After the battle of the Alma, the change of the base of operations to Balaclava was effected by the army as a movable column. The movement was quite justifiable, the enemy having been defeated in the field,

where it would be correct to infer his available force was present. As some principles of warfare do not change, and never can change—amongst which is the one that a beaten army is always demoralised—not only was the march of the movable column safe, but the fortress itself would probably have fallen had there been a vigorous pursuit.

Mediocre commanders apply cut-and-dried rules to all warfare; hence campaigns are spun out with grievous and unnecessary loss to both sides. It is the safest plan, however, for ordinary commanders to work by certain systems; as, if they acted otherwise, they would probably reckon upon false data, and cause the loss of their armies.

EXPEDITION TO ABYSSINIA.

If ever there was an expedition which

should have been conducted by means of the movable column, it was that to Abyssinia. However, the plan designed could not have been more elaborate, had it been intended to reach Moscow, with Riga as a base of operations. A railway and roads were constructed, as if the object of attack were a second Sebastopol. It was perfectly well known that the Abyssinians were in much the same state of efficiency in respect to arms as they were in the days of King Solomon, and accordingly it should have been assumed that a brigade of three regiments of European infantry could march into the country, go where it liked, and leave when it liked. The aim of the expedition was no more than to do this. A few light field guns, carried on mules, would have sufficed to open a way into the strong

natural fortress which was said to exist. The king was more likely to fly with the captives out of reach, on hearing of the approach of a large force, than if he had been informed that only a small one was advancing. In truth, at the end of the campaign a part of the army was formed into a separate force and moved ahead, achieving the object of the expedition. This could have been effected by the same body had it alone been employed from the beginning as a movable column, without any support between it and the sea.

THE WAR OF 1870.

The march of the French army under MacMahon, in 1870, from Chalons towards the Belgian frontier, could only end in one way. An army, routed by superior num-

bers, instead of falling back on the capital as the base of operations, formed itself into a movable column, and attempted to perform a task which could only have been accomplished by a force flushed with victory over a demoralized enemy.

The great German army which besieged Paris was on the principle of the movable column, until the fall of Metz. Ordinary commanders would never have dared to move on the capital, leaving a force of 170,000 soldiers, including the Imperial Guard, in their rear. The average general acts according to certain specified rules, the consummate commander makes these rules give way, on occasion, to great principles. The inference drawn on this occasion was, that the large French army in Metz was so demoralized by successive defeats, that

a German force equal in numbers would be sufficient to keep it where it was. The result proved that the German calculation was right, although the world was equally surprised with the French nation that the army did not seriously attempt to break out of Metz and move to the help of Paris.

INVASION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Whilst on the subject of military expeditions, it may be as well to express an opinion on a subject so near the hearts of the people of this country—the invasion of Great Britain. The opinion is this, that whilst this country continues a great naval power, a successful invasion is impossible, and no attempt would be made by any one but a madman. The destruction or surrender of an invading force would be inevitable, as

the enemy would be unable to keep up a base of operations on the coast. His base would be swept away in a few days at most after he had effected a landing. He would thus find himself a movable column, cut off from his communications, without reserves, and, in fact, in a trap. It is not in this way that a great country like Great Britain can be invaded and conquered. The force at home is ample for all defensive purposes. The regular army, however, must always form an expensive item in our expenditure, as we have many heavy responsibilities abroad. We therefore require to keep up a reserve at home in the highest state of efficiency, ready to embark, at a moment's notice, for service in the East or West, peace in both hemispheres being in a state of chronic precariousness. When this coun-

try can no longer be sure of defending its coasts, it will be time to pass a law that every man become a soldier, and be assigned a place in which he may fight for his country in the hour of need.

OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN.

The army of Afghanistan was a movable column, because the powerful kingdom of the Punjaub was in the rear. There was also Scindë, then under the sway of the Ameers, who, when the disasters happened in 1841, were reported to be doubtful allies. This report was borne in mind, and their dominions were annexed in 1843. When Afghanistan was occupied by the British, the Punjaub was under the rule of Runjeet Singh, who possessed a magnificent army, organised by European officers. When this

army came into conflict with the British, a few years later, on the field of Ferozeshah, the fate of India was said to have trembled in the balance. Runjeet Singh was a very able man, and on good terms with the British, but it was absurd to construct on him personally a base of operations, the tenure of his life being precarious, and revolutions being likely to break out on his death. But if he had been immortal, it would not have been justifiable to have interposed him as a base for the conquest of a neighbouring country, his adherence to treaties, power to retain his position and to keep his army under control, being taken for granted. War cannot be made successfully in this slipshod fashion. A rising took place in Affghanistan, which could easily have been suppressed in its commencement at Cabul,

had ordinarily energetic measures been resorted to, and the revolution nipped in the bud, as all revolutions ought to be. The result of the insurrection was, a disaster involving the destruction of a portion of the army of occupation. Had a rupture with the Punjaub occurred, the whole force in Affghanistan would probably have perished, to say nothing of possible defeat at the hands of the Seikh army in India, our European force there having been diminished.

All honour is due on the part of the British to the memory of Runjeet Singh.

The disaster of Cabul having been avenged in 1842, it was not considered advisable to establish a position again in such a trap as Affghanistan, with its difficult approaches, and with at least one formidable military

power intervening. But the undertaking was wrong and unfair from the beginning. The Affghans had never done us any harm, but on the contrary, had always treated with marked consideration and honour British agents, when sent amongst them. Their country not being contiguous to our territory, there never had been any misunderstandings, and if they deposed one king and set up another, it was no business of ours to interfere. • •

COLONIZATION OF AFFGHANISTAN.

Since the annexation of the Punjaub and Scinde, there have been different opinions expressed with regard to Great Britain permanently occupying Affghanistan, supposing that such a measure could in fairness be had recourse to. The late General John

Jacob was an advocate for the occupation of the country, and for the inhabitants being converted into hewers of wood and drawers of water. According to his view the country could be colonized by Europeans, and a population raised up which would be capable of meeting the wave of invasion from the North. The country most probably could be colonized by the Anglo-Saxon race, as although hot in summer, yet the winter is one of frost and snow, which seem essential to the continuance of the race. The Affghans are a people of remarkable physical development. They are in fact the Patagonians of the East, and would consequently be difficult to hold in subjection. Still this could be done, if a strict system were kept up, which would prevent them from obtaining formidable weapons of warfare, and if the

military posts were carefully guarded. Now-a-days, the tribes which inhabit the districts of the passes are not formidable, when good shots in European regiments can pick off individuals at a distance of 800 yards. There is no apprehension on the subject of keeping up communication with India. The old difficulties, therefore, as to a military occupation of Affghanistan being a safe movement entirely disappear. The question is, would it be a prudent one? It does not appear to be so, for we would only be bringing ourselves as a purely military power nearer to Russia on a vast continent. This condition of things would be unnatural to Great Britain, whose policy is to acquire positions, which may enable her not to occupy, but to command, such countries as Affghanistan.

POLICY TOWARDS AFFGHANISTAN.

It would be an exceedingly dangerous policy to form an alliance, and to supply the Affghans with modern arms, making them an efficient military people. Their character is a strange mixture of frankness and duplicity. An alliance with them is, therefore, not to be depended upon, it being extremely likely that the prospect of plundering Hindustan would fire their imagination, and that they would make common cause with an invader. The policy to be adopted towards Affghanistan should be to remain on amicable terms, and to make the Ameer a present occasionally in money, as a testimony of our good will. A day may come when he may have it in his power to render us a service. It should never be forgotten,

however, that an Affghan contingent was present at the battle of Goojerat. Doubtless the impression was that Chillianwallah was a great defeat, and that the opportunity of the spoiler had arrived.

SIR CHARLES NAPIER.

The great captains known in the world's history can be counted on one's fingers, and Sir Charles Napier would have been added to the list, had he possessed opportunities. The prime of his life, however, from 1815 to 1843, was a quiet time, there not having been much service even in the East, with the exception of the Affghan war. The administrative capacity of Sir Charles was equal to his military skill, the Government of Scinde after the conquest having served

as a model for other provinces. This was an extraordinary result of the labours of an old man, who had never set foot in India till over sixty years of age. In former days, when a Governor-General had the power of making war, a supreme ruler like Sir Charles Napier would have been invaluable, as military affairs would have been conducted on true principles of strategy. He was a humane, and, above all things, a just man. In his time he was maligned, but to be so is only an evil attendant upon greatness, and is the fate of those who are in advance of their generation. The sight of the eagle is different from the range of the crow's groveling vision. The rooks, therefore, assembled in high dudgeon, and in full chorus pecked at the noble bird.

Sir Charles, possessing a great mind and a

large soul, was one of those combinations of men rarely met with. The two gifts requisite to form a perfect commander were in him united, for nothing could exceed the enthusiasm with which he was regarded by those who served under him. Empires are conquered and founded by such men as him at changeful periods of the world's history.

If any one will look into the correspondence of Sir Charles Napier when at Cephalonia, he will there find about the time of Vikovitch's arrival at Cabul, that the line of the Caspian was designated as the true one to establish for the defence of India.

THE WAR WITH RUSSIA.

A great opportunity for obtaining the desirable frontier presented itself when war

broke out between Great Britain and Russia. Judging by the result of that war, it is difficult to know what were the objects of the British nation when it was undertaken. It was probably considered that Russia had been too aggressive a power, and that if the Turkish Empire were to fall under the dominion of the Czar our intercourse with India might be interfered with. The policy of the French nation was plain, and was the same which had always prevailed. Napoleon, at St. Helena, in reference to the Emperor Alexander, said, "I alone could have stopped the deluge of his Tartars. The danger is great and imminent for the Continent, more especially for Constantinople; he coveted it much, and would have cajoled me on the subject, but I always turned a deaf ear. That Empire, impaired as it is, formed the

point of separation ; it was the marsh which prevented my flank from being turned."

After the fall of Sebastopol, France of course desired to conclude a peace, the fleets of Russia having been sent to the bottom of the Black Sea, instead of dominating in the Mediterranean. The expedition to the Crimea was ably conceived, and no more sure way of draining the resources of Russia, and ultimately defeating her, could have been devised. As matters turned out, it was better that Sebastopol should not have fallen after the battle of the Alma, for Russia would not, in all probability, then have concluded a peace, and to find out another equally vulnerable point would have been a matter of difficulty, if not of impossibility. But through the war being prolonged at one of her extremities, Russia having no efficient

means of transport to the Crimea, was fast bleeding to death, and succumbed under exhaustion. The exclusion of the Russian flag from the Mediterranean was a matter of no consequence to Great Britain, a Russian squadron more or less on the high seas making no difference to this country. If Great Britain throughout the Eastern war had had a distinct policy, instead of apparently no policy at all, arrangements should have been entered into for extending the war further to the east, with the view of our permanently annexing the province of Georgia. It would have been advisable, at this stage, that Great Britain should carry on the war alone in this quarter. France could have attempted to revive the nationality of Poland, or concluded peace, as she deemed fit.

GEORGIA AND THE CASPIAN.

Great value was placed by the Russians on the possession of Georgia, hence the strenuous efforts made to reduce Kars, a Turkish fortress, not far from the frontier. Kars, in the hands of the Russians, would act as a check on an expedition from the soil of Turkey. The fortress should have been relieved, but it would have been no difficult task for this country to have retaken it from the Russians. The conquest of Georgia would have been easy, as in those days the forces of Russia were isolated, communications being imperfect, owing to the physical features of the country, in which the Circassians were still maintaining a struggle for independence, and the navigation of the Caspian not having been developed, all

Russia's efforts having been hitherto confined to the Black Sea. Great Britain could have formed a navy on the Caspian, and constructed a railway between it and the Black Sea, which should have been made free to all nations, Bosphorus included, as the Straits of Gibraltar are free to ships bearing every flag. This country would thus have commanded both Persia and Affghanistan, and would have outflanked Russia in her approach to the South.

THE SEA OF ARAL AND THE OXUS.

The Oxus, which now falls into the Sea of Aral, formerly emptied itself into the Caspian. The old course of the river could have been opened up, and the Sea of Aral reached. The mouth of the Oxus could have been cleared, and the river made navigable as far

as Balkh. With respect to its capabilities, Burnes says "The Oxus is a navigable river throughout the greater portion of its course. Its channel is remarkably straight, and free from rocks, rapids, and whirlpools; nor is it much obstructed by sandbanks; were it not for the marshes, which choke its embouchure, it might be ascended from the Sea of Aral to near Koondooz, a distance of 600 miles."

At Charjooe, near Bokhara, five heaves of the lead by Burnes, on the 17th August, after the river had passed its greatest rise, gave depth 12, 18, 29, 20, and 18 feet.

Burnes also further says, "The advantages of the Oxus, both in a political and commercial point of view, must then be regarded as very great. The many facilities which have been enumerated point it out either as the channel of merchandise, or

the route of a military expedition. Nor is it from the features of the river itself that we form such a conclusion.' It is to be remembered that its banks are peopled and cultivated. It must, therefore, be viewed as a river which is navigable, and possessing great facilities for improving the extent of that navigation. This is a fact of great political and commercial importance, whether a hostile nation may turn it to the gratification of ambition, or a friendly power here seek for the extension and improvement of its trade. In either case, the Oxus presents many fair prospects, since it holds the most direct course, and connects, with the exception of a narrow desert, the nations of Europe with the remote regions of Central Asia."

The narrow desert here referred to is that which lies between the Sea of Aral and the

Caspian, and in which is the old bed of the Oxus.

THE TREATY OF 1856.

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The Treaty of Paris left the Circassians to their fate. Since the Eastern war Russia has been assiduous in developing the navigation of the Caspian, and has advanced her frontier to Bokhara and Samarkand, from which Timour marched his legions to the conquest of Hindustan. Both the kingdoms of Persia and Affghanistan are thus thoroughly commanded, and lie at her mercy. From Samarkand a Russian army has merely to walk through Affghanistan to our Indian frontier. The whole of the base line, which might have been seized by Great Britain during the war, is now in the possession of Russia. Great Britain having been com-

mitted to Empire in Asia, the line would have been most suitable to her, and would probably have enabled her to retain India, as long as she remained a great maritime power. Under present circumstances, she may lose her Eastern Empire when her power is at its zenith, and before she loses her supremacy at sea.

ATTITUDE OF GREAT BRITAIN IN 1870.

During the war of 1870, Russia announced her intention of not adhering to the terms of the Treaty of 1856, in respect of the neutralisation of the Black Sea. There were two courses open to Great Britain—to approve the intention of Russia or to disapprove, and go to war in case of the violation of the Treaty. The first was not the most honourable of the alternatives. The terms

imposed upon Russia were humiliating to her as a great power, and it might have been reasonably presumed that she would endeavour to escape from them when an opportunity offered. The matter would have been a fair subject for a conference in a time of peace; and, had one been convened, the terms should have been modified. But the duty of this country was clear. The answer of Great Britain should have been, that, having been allied with France in bringing a great war to a successful close, the result of which was the imposing of certain conditions in respect of the Black Sea, she could not consent to consider their abrogation until the termination of the war, when all parties to the Treaty could consult and deliberate on so important a subject. Had this answer been returned, and had the Treaty been violated,

no matter what may have been the previous diplomacy of Turkey, Great Britain and that Power were committed to war against Russia, whether or not they were joined by Austria. Turkey possesses a fleet and a fine army. Russia having no fleet in the Black Sea, and attacks on the Turkish Empire in both Continents being largely dependent for success upon naval operations, with the British fleet and a British army thrown into the scale, the safety of the Turkish Empire would have been assured. The only formidable contingency would have been an invasion of India from Bokhara and Samarkand. It is impossible to reckon upon what might be the conduct of the natives of India, in case of an invasion by Russia. One thing is certain, that for a time they would not know their own minds, and that, finally, they

would adopt the course which they deemed the most profitable.

DEFENSIVE POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

It is now the policy of Great Britain to conduct her diplomacy so that she may remain at peace with Russia, if possible. The Treaty of 1856 has been abrogated, and the Eastern war has been in vain. The line of base of operations, which should have been seized by Great Britain, has been consolidated by Russia, and she is now in overpowering strength on the Caspian. What has been done cannot now be undone. It might be supposed that, with a territory stretching across the northern part of Asia, Russia has more than she can manage. This is true; but Governments do not always carry out the policy which they

desire. The fear of internal revolution often impels rulers to rush into wars which they know to be inexpédient and unjust. It behoves Great Britain, therefore, to look the contingency of an invasion of India and an insurrection of the natives fairly in the face, and to keep up in the British islands a reserve ready to embark for the East. Great nations which are contiguous to each other, somehow or other, always do come into collision sooner or later. Russia is now near to our Indian frontier, and it is the duty of Great Britain to be prepared.

The positions taken up by Russia in Central Asia point unmistakeably to an invasion of our Indian frontier at a fitting time. In these days, wars of the greatest magnitude are entered upon without any warning whatever. It is an age of conspiracies on a

gigantic scale when war is preparing. The Prussians had long been ready for the war with France, which they saw to be inevitable, and their knowledge of the enemy's country was one of the causes of their brilliant success. Great Britain, therefore, should have a carefully-prepared plan for combating an invasion at the Indian frontier, so that she may act vigorously and strike a blow at once, which her maritime power ought to enable her to do. Above all, she should not attempt to oppose Russia in Affghanistan front to front by means of an army despatched from India. By doing so, she would court inevitable defeat, as her European troops would be a mere handful compared with the legions of Russia. Every European soldier in India at the time would be required to be retained there, in order to suppress probable insurrec-

tion. Whatever plan may be adopted by this country to repel an invasion of India, one condition is indispensable, that, wherever a blow is struck, it should be at a distance from the frontier.

Within the last few years Great Britain has inaugurated a policy of obliging her colonies, with inhabitants of European descent, to take care of themselves. In the same manner the management of the frontier question has been placed on the Indian authorities. Lord Mayo invited the Ameer of Affghanistan to an interview at Umballah, which was considered a great success, and the matter was held to be in a manner settled. This is trifling with the whole question. Not that the Ameer is not to be conciliated; but to suppose that the sympathies of the Affghans towards the British, actively exerted,

could possibly prevent the advance of a Russian army, from Bokhara and Samarkand, is to indulge in a miserable delusion. This country requires to wake up to the fact, that of possible complications out of the British islands, that of the Indian frontier is more important than all others put together; and that not only can the question not take care of itself, but when the time comes, it will be necessary to exert the whole force of the empire. An invasion of India would bring about a more gigantic struggle than any in which it has up to this time been the lot of this country to engage. Persia in ancient times played an important part in the world's history. The time is probably not far distant when that country will again be the theatre of great events.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GREAT BRITAIN,

It will be well here to examine what Great Britain, guided by her own interest alone, is required to do, and for what purposes she is obliged to keep up a powerful navy, and a reserve force located in the British Islands, in the highest state of efficiency, and ready to embark on the shortest notice.

Great Britain is obliged to—

Protect Egypt, and if need be, on account of that country, to go to war with any power or powers whatever, Egypt being one of the pivots on which the traffic of the world turns :

To be ready to succour the European army in India in case of an insurrection :

To protect her Indian frontier in case of

invasion by a great and powerful military neighbour :

To be prepared for hostilities with China, wars with that empire being periodical :

(It will be as well also to recollect that wars with China will be more formidable in the future than they have been in the past, owing to the invention of new arms, which have been imported largely by the Chinese.)

To protect Australia, New Zealand, the Straits Settlements, Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, Malta, Gibraltar, and the West India Islands :

To keep a considerable force in Ireland in case of being involved in war abroad.

The above is a heavy list of responsibilities, from which there is no escape ; and it would be well that in fixing the establishment of the

forces, the duties incumbent on this Empire should be fairly acknowledged.

BELGIUM.

In addition, Great Britain is bound by existing treaties to defend Belgium. It is very extraordinary that such a treaty should exist with reference to Belgium. There are some old notions which die hard, amongst which is the one that the possession of a certain harbour necessarily increases the naval strength of a country which has numerous other ports. The sword and not the scabbard being formidable, the naval power of a country is shown by its ships and not by its harbours. One more or less of the latter, therefore, in possession of a foreign power, can have no bearing on such an important question as the invasion of a great

and powerful maritime nation like Great Britain. It may be said that if Belgium were attacked, this country would only render assistance by means of her fleets. When Great Britain has been engaged in foreign wars, she has hitherto operated also by means of armies, and exerted herself to the utmost. In the case of Belgium also, she would do the same, if committed to war. This country, having no vital interest in the independence of Belgium, should endeavour to set herself free from the embarrassment of the existing treaty, if she can do so with honour.

CANADA.

In regard to Canada, the situation is one of extreme difficulty.

The offensive tone habitual to the Amc-

ricans in their relations with this country, is greatly due to the fact that Canada is a weak point in the armour of Great Britain. Were it not a colony of the United Kingdom, the blustering tone of the Americans could be treated with indifference. The possession of Canada is no advantage to Great Britain. Were the connection severed, trade and emigration would continue all the same, and, according to the custom of civilized countries, property would remain with its owners, not as would be the case in India, were our empire to come to an end. Should war break out between this country and the United States, in our present relations with the colony, we should be obliged to defend Canada by land, in addition to carrying on a naval warfare. The United States have shown that when occasion re-

quires they can become one of the most formidable military powers in existence, and therefore the struggle on land would be gigantic. As collisions take place sooner or later between two great neighbours on the same continent, this country has to consider whether it is advisable to retain Canada. If the colony could be enabled to stand alone and be independent, the gain to Great Britain would be great, as then she could concentrate her resources for the protection of her empire in the East.

A war with America, therefore, under present circumstances, holds out two alternatives, and both are objectionable. The first, which it would be our duty to adopt, is, to engage in a sanguinary struggle on the Canadian frontier, for no Imperial interest; the second, the abandonment of a

colony before its inhabitants are sufficiently numerous and powerful to protect themselves. It is desirable that the difficulty should be solved, if possible, by the joint action of the Canadians and the British people.

A powerful empire like that of Great Britain should have a distinct policy as to peace or war marked out beforehand; and it should be clearly arranged, no matter what political party may be in office, that on no account will certain circumstances cause this country to declare war, but that, on the other hand, she will in some cases not only engage in hostilities, but throw her whole strength into the conflict, and prolong the struggle to the last.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

Assassination—Exceptions to General Prosperity—Indian Experience—Progress—The Warlike Epoch—Permanent Secretary of State for India.

ASSASSINATION.

THE assassination of Chief-Justice Norman and the Viceroy naturally produced a profound impression in this country. There is every reason to suppose that the former was struck down in consequence of his having tried Ameer Khan, the Wahabee conspirator. Europeans have occasionally been assassinated in India in time of peace, chiefly by Mahommedans with a grievance, and under the influence of stimulants. There are

numbers of ill-conditioned fellows amongst Mahommedans to be met with loafing about in India. They may be found about the mosques, and although they perform their religious observances, yet they are generally men who, having failed in life, are disappointed, and who are not so much fanatics as they are ruffians. It is from this class that assassins spring, for those belonging to it have nothing to lose, and in many cases they are tired of their dreary life. The assassin of Justice Norman appears to have been one of those morose, forlorn beings, whose life was of no value to himself, and who would be likely to consent to sacrifice it at the instigation of others, if convinced that he was performing a meritorious act, which would ensure him reward hereafter.

Although there was, probably, no actual

connection between the two murders, yet it is likely that the one influenced the other. The Khyberry immured at the Andamans under what he regarded as an unjust sentence, if tired of his existence and desirous of terminating it by the murder of a European, would, most probably, had the murder of the Chief Justice not taken place, have attempted the assassination of one of the officials at Port Blair. His sentence not having been remitted, it is probable that he had long been meditating crime, and that the assassination of the Viceroy suggested itself to his mind in consequence of his having heard of the murder of such an important personage as the Chief Justice.

There is no cause for dread that murders of Europeans will become matters of everyday occurrence in India, in times of peace,

the number of desperadoes, without a fear of death being limited.

EXCEPTIONS TO GENERAL PROSPERITY.

The British Empire in India, as a whole, has been justly acquired, the treachery and aggression of native princes in past times having brought about the annexation of their dominions. There is a large amount of glare and glitter about Oriental princes. Bedizened with costly jewels, they make lavish presents, and the buildings and monuments which they have erected are impressive. Europeans are therefore apt to entertain erroneous ideas, from the contemplation of this outward splendour, and to overlook the poverty and degradation of the mass of the people.

The British rule in India has been a great

blessing to the agriculturists, who form the great body of the people, and whose lot is now more prosperous than ever it was before. The produce of the soil has increased in price three or four fold within the last twenty years, while comparatively little has been added to the land tax. While railways tend to prevent famines in particular districts, by ensuring the transport of food, they have had the general effect of rendering the necessaries of life dear in India. Consequently it should be borne in mind that there is a large non-agricultural class in the country which is worse off than it was before, and which will naturally be discontented. The earnings of these people have risen, but not in proportion to the dearness of provisions, whilst they are subject to more Imperial and local taxation

than they were in the days of cheapness. It would be unwise to ignore the existence of this class, or its influence on popular opinion, the more especially as in it are included the native armies.

INDIAN EXPERIENCE.

It may be doubted if there ever has been a European official trained in India who has understood that empire as a whole. Not only is the knowledge of the civil and military classes in India generally local, but it is prejudiced and one-sided. On no point is their advice more likely to be detrimental to the interests of the State, than on the subject of Central Asia. In past times, the following of their advice in this matter has been a cause of disaster. Even in matters referring to the internal government of

India, the opinions of civilians, who have held high office, is not always reliable. The higher the offices they have held, the more likely are they to have been blinded by the adulation of the natives. Their views, therefore, as to native character and loyalty are liable to be too rose-coloured. A secretary-of-state coming into power on a change of ministry is placed consequently in a situation of great difficulty, depending as he does for counsel on those whose range of vision is circumscribed. It is, therefore, desirable that a Secretary of State should by his own knowledge and experience be enabled to judge for himself.

PROGRESS.

Whilst the religion of the natives has been respected, except in its cruelties and enor-

mities, the 'British' Government has not halted, and should not halt in progress. All Orientals require to be driven in the path of progress, and it is good for them that they should be so driven. Of themselves they would do nothing. The instinct of natives has at first been opposed to railways, telegraphs, and all modern inventions, which are essential to civilization. After a time, when they feel the benefits, they become converted, and recognise their usefulness.

THE WARLIKE EPOCH.

The majority of mankind avert their gaze from matters which may turn out calamitous, or they look at them in an oblique fashion. It would be well for this country to consider what would be the consequences

of the loss of the Indian Empire, what would be the fate of those dependent for subsistence on the Indian revenues, and what would become of the vast sums invested in Indian securities, railways, and other property? If this country does not watch the frontier question, and is not prepared to repel invasion, the result may be a frightful amount of pauperism in this country, amongst classes ill adapted by nature to a state of penury.

Great Britain is a tremendous power at home, even although Ireland is a thorn in her side. She is, however, at present a weak power in Asia, and is a victim to self-delusion, which is the precursor of misfortune. We are most probably approaching the middle of the warlike epoch which revived in 1853. Since that time the collapses

have been great and sudden. The pre-dominance of the Southern States in the American Union is now at an end, Austria has collapsed in Germany and in Italy, whilst the armies of France have not only been routed, but transported bodily into captivity. Instead of acquiring the Rhine provinces, France has been obliged to cede territory to Germany. In these days when the space of the world has become practically circumscribed, a nation must needs be wise to avoid a collapse in some quarter. The human family has been drawn near together by the railway and the telegraph, but the race being pugnacious, general amity is not to be looked for any more than passengers on a long sea voyage, and cooped up in a narrow vessel, can be expected to live at peace with one another. As in the

human body, unfavourable conditions single out the weak organ for attack, so in case of a general convulsion the vulnerable point of Great Britain would be the Indian frontier. Let precautions therefore be adopted in time, and let the nation look the contingency of invasion fairly in the face.

PERMANENT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
INDIA.

The Indian Empire would be much better governed internally than it is, were there a permanent Secretary of State. Dr. Johnson, when questioned as to why he defined "pastern" the "knee of a horse," replied "pure ignorance." So Parliament, conscious of its ignorance and its incompetence to manage India, makes over

that Empire to be governed by one man. It is not right, however, in Parliament to deliver over so many millions of natives and so many thousands of Europeans to the despotic will of a minister, who may have the soul not of a statesman, but of a clerk. There is one British statesman who is peculiarly qualified to administer the affairs of India. The head of a great house, the son of an illustrious sire, he has filled several important offices under the Crown, including that of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—and Secretary of State for India. Moreover, he has been marked out by the nation for the highest honour in the future. If he would forego this prospect, and would consent, if called by the country to administer permanently the affairs of India, that vast empire would in all probability, under his

sagacious rule, if protected from invasion, enjoy the greatest blessing which can fall to the lot of any nation—that of having no history.

THE END.

